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Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-03

INFO OCT-01 MBFR-02 DODE-00 ACDA-10 EUR-10 PRS-01 USIA-04

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9/4/73 EXT. 21862
APPROVED BY D/MBFR:JDEAN
DOD/JCS-J-5:COL. LAFFERTY (INFO)
DOD/ISA:MR. BARTHOLOMEW
JSC: MR. HYLAND S/S MR. MILLER
ACDA:MR. LINEBAUGH
EUR/RPM:MR. STREATOR
PM/DCA: MR. BAKER
S/PRS: MR. KING
USIA/WE: MR. STUART
---------- 119303
P R 180150Z SEP 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 185002

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: MBFR: PRESS AND PUBLIC

REF: USNATO 3829

1. THE MISSION HAS IDENTIFIED IN A TIMELY WAY AN IMPOR-
TANT ASPECT OF THE ALLIED APPROACH TO MBFR NEGOTIATIONS.
IT IS CLEAR THAT PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT OF
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THE NATO APPROACH TO MBFR WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO THE
SUCCESS OF THE ALLIANCE NEGOTIATING EFFORT AND TO ACCEP-
TANCE OF ITS OUTCOME BY POLITICAL OPINION. THE TASK OF
BUILDING AND KEEPING UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT WILL BE

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COMPLICATED, AS THE MISSION POINTS OUT, BY THE LIMITED CONFIDENTIALITY AND MULTILATERAL CHARACTER OF THE TALKS AND BY SOVIET AND EE EFFORTS TO GAIN NEGOTIATING AND PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGES. WE AGREE, THEREFORE, THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE BEST MEANS OF OBTAINING PUBLIC SUPPORT AT THE OUTSET OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS.

2. IT IS DESIRABLE THAT THERE SHOULD BE SOME COORDINATION OF NATIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMS DIRECTED TOWARD PUBLIC, PARLIAMENTS, AND PRESS ON MBFR. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT EITHER FEASIBLE OR DESIRABLE TO ENVISAGE A CENTRALLY DIRECTED INFORMATION PROGRAM. THE INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION NEEDS OF EACH MEMBER GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE US, WILL VARY WITH THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN

EACH COUNTRY. A HIGHLY DETAILED AND UNIFIED PROGRAM COORDINATED WITHIN THE ALLIANCE WOULD RUN THE RISK OF IRRELEVANCE OR MISPLACED EMPHASIS IN PARTICULAR INSTANCES. IT IS THEREFORE OUR VIEW THAT NATO PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATION ON MBFR SHOULD BE LIMITED AT LEAST AT THE OUTSET TO IDENTIFICATION OF MAIN THEMES WHICH MIGHT BE EMPHASIZED AND SHOULD AVOID A LEVEL OF DETAIL LIABLE TO REQUIRE AN EXTENSIVE ADDITIONAL DRAFTING EXERCISE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.

3. AS A VEHICLE FOR A LIMITED PROGRAM OF THIS SORT, WE WOULD PROPOSE THAT ALLIES DEVELOP A CHECKLIST OF GENERAL MBFR THEMES WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE A RECOMMENDED AID FOR BRIEFING OF JOURNALISTS IN BRUSSELS AND CAPITALS. THE CHECKLIST SUGGESTED BELOW, BASED LARGELY ON SUGGESTIONS IN PARA 6 REFTEL, COULD BE USED AS SOON AS AGREED. THE CHECKLIST WOULD BE UPDATED OR AMENDED AS NECESSARY. FYI. WE WILL WISH THROUGHOUT THE MBFR PROCESS TO ENSURE TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE THAT CONGRESS RECEIVES MBFR INFORMATION FROM EXECUTIVE BRANCH SOURCES RATHER THAN PRESS, AND THAT NATO CHECKLIST TOPICS DO NOT GO BEYOND WHAT HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO CONGRESS AT ANY POINT. CONFIDENTIAL

END FYI. AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE, WE SHOULD AVOID AN INFORMATION POLICY WHICH COULD RESULT IN PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS AS TO POSSIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE UNREALISTIC OR WHICH ARE SO SPECIFIC AS TO CONSTRAIN NEGOTIATORS.

4. THE MAIN THEMES RECOMMENDED FOR INITIAL CHECKLIST ARE:

A. POSITIVE APPROACH. MBFR IS A POSITIVE ALLIANCE INITIATIVE. PERSISTENT WESTERN EFFORTS HAVE SECURED SOVIET AGREEMENT TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS. THESE NEGOTIATIONS WILL TEST SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ADDRESS AND RESOLVE CONCRETE MILITARY SECURITY ISSUES, AND THUS

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SERIOUSNESS OF SOVIET INTEREST IN DETENTE. SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHENING PEACE, SECURITY AND MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BOTH IN EUROPE AND IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS GENERALLY.

B. ALLIED GOALS. THE BASIC AIM OF THE MBFR PROJECT IS TO ACHIEVE A MORE STABLE MILITARY BALANCE IN CENTRAL EUROPE AT LOWER LEVELS OF FORCES WITH SECURITY UNDIMINISHED. THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WILL DEAL WITH THE SIZE, CHARACTER AND ACTIVITIES OF MILITARY FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THUS, THE AIM OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IS NOT ONLY TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THESE FORCES, BUT ALSO TO AFFECT THEIR CHARACTER BY REDUCING THEIR THREATENING OR DE-

STABILIZING ASPECTS (CONSISTENT WITH DEFENSIVE NEEDS AND PURPOSES) AND TO DEAL WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES IN A MANNER WHICH MINIMIZES THE RISK OF MISCALCULATION ON EITHER SIDE, SURPRISE ATTACK, OR USE OF FORCES IN A DESTABILIZING MANNER.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM.

SOVIET FORCES ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SECURITY CONCERN OF THE US AND ITS ALLIES. DEPLOYMENT OF LARGE SOVIET FORCES IN EASTERN EUROPE HAS CONFIDENTIAL

REQUIRED LARGE NATO DEFENSE EFFORTS. IN THEIR PRESENT SIZE AND CONFIGURATION, SOVIET FORCES -- WHATEVER CURRENT SOVIET INTENTIONS MAY BE -- HAVE THE CAPACITY TO THREATEN WESTERN EUROPE, AND THEIR REDUCTION WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO STABILITY. IF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS ARE TO MEET THE CRITERION OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY, THEY MUST ADDRESS CERTAIN DISPARITIES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST WHICH ARE AN OBJECTIVE FEATURE OF THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THESE DISPARITIES ARE:

(1) MANPOWER: THE WARSAW PACT HAS LARGER NUMBERS OF ACTIVE GROUND PERSONNEL IN CENTRAL EUROPE;

(2) EQUIPMENT: WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE ARE HEAVILY WEIGHTED TOWARD ARMORED CAPABILITIES, AND PACT TANKS SIGNIFICANTLY OUTNUMBER NATO'S. THUS, SOVIET GROUND FORCES ARE PERCEIVED AS CONFIGURED FOR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL FOR ATTACK.

(3) GEOGRAPHY: THE USSR ADJOINS CENTRAL EUROPE. THE US AND CANADA ARE SEPARATED FROM IT BY THE ATLANTIC OCEAN. THUS, THE USSR ENJOYS AN ADVANTAGE IN REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES; RETURN DISTANCES FOR SOVIET FORCES WHICH MIGHT BE WITHDRAWN WOULD BE MUCH SHORTER THAN RE-

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TURN DISTANCES FOR WITHDRAWN NORTH AMERICAN FORCES.

D. CONCEPT OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY. NATO FORCES HAVE PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN PRESERVING PEACE AND MAINTAINING THE SECURITY OF MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS. THE ALLIES COULD NOT ACCEPT ANY MBFR OUTCOME WHICH DID NOT PRESERVE UNDIMINISHED THIS SECURITY. IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, THE ALLIES ARE NOT GOING TO DISMANTLE THE NATO COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM WHICH HAS SERVED THEM SO WELL. ON THE CONTRARY, ALLIES MUST MAINTAIN THE MILITARY CAPABILITY TO FULFILL THEIR AGREED NATO

STRATEGY OF FORWARD DEFENSE, FLEXIBLE RESPONSE AND NUCLEAR DETERRENCE. OTHERWISE, FORCE REDUCTIONS WILL NOT HAVE SERVED THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING STABILITY IF THEY RESULT IN A LOWERING OF THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD OR FORCE NATO TO RETREAT FROM FLEXIBLE RESPONSE TO THE THREAT OF MASSIVE CONFIDENTIAL

RETALIATION. MOREOVER, PENDING A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME TO NEGOTIATIONS, NATO SHOULD NOT UNILATERALLY REDUCE ITS FORCES. TO DO SO WOULD NOT ONLY DIMINISH NATO SECURITY, BUT IT COULD UNDERCUT THE NEGOTIATIONS BY REMOVING ANY INCENTIVE TO THE EAST TO NEGOTIATE A BALANCED REDUCTION OF FORCES AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE STABILITY.

E. ROLE OF NATO. MBFR IS A UNIQUE NEGOTIATION BETWEEN MEMBERS OF TWO ALLIANCES. IT IS A NATO INITIATIVE WHICH EMBODIES ONE OF THE TWO FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF NATO POLICY: POLICY: DETENTE AND DEFENSE. NATO HAS DEVOTED MUCH TIME AND EFFORT TO DEVELOPMENT OF REALISTIC PROPOSALS, AIMED AT ENHANCING PEACE AND STABILITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE. COORDINATION, THROUGH NATO, OF THIS JOINT INITIATIVE BY ALLIED GOVERNMENTS VIS-A-VIS THE WARSAW PACT HAS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A GREAT CHALLENGE. IN THE PROCESS, THE UNITY, VIGOR AND FORWARD-LOOKING SPIRIT OF NATO HAVE BEEN ENHANCED. THE ALLIANCE IS DEMONSTRATING ITS CAPACITY TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE 1970'S; AND THE NEED FOR ITS CONTINUATION IN A PERIOD OF DETENTE.

F. ALLIED NEGOTIATING APPROACH. (WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT ADVISABLE TO SET FORTH AT THIS TIME THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING APPROACH TO THE PUBLIC IN TERMS OF COMPONENTS OF THE NEGOTIATING PROGRAM NOW UNDER DISCUSSION IN NATO. WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE ALLIANCE APPROACH IS AGREED WITHIN NATO AND PARLIAMENTS HAVE BEEN INFORMED.)

5. FYI: BEYOND AMB. RUMSFELD'S USEFUL STATEMENT TO BUWALDA (USNATO 4262), WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO INTERVENE IN THE HAGUE IN AN ATTEMPT TO HEAD

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OFF PROPOSED SENTENCE ON MBFR IN NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT ANNUAL BUDGET MESSAGE (USNATO 4258). APART FROM BUWALDA'S STATEMENT THAT GON IS RESOLVED TO GO AHEAD WITH STATEMENT, WE BELIEVE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS ARGUE AGAINST SUCH AN ATTEMPT:

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A. THE PROPOSED STATEMENT IS GENERAL ENOUGH NOT TO BE DAMAGING TO STRATEGY ALLIES PLAN TO ADOPT IN THE NEGO-TIATIONS, AND IT IS NOT PRESENTED AS A DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING POSITION.

B. IT IS LIKELY THAT OTHER NATO CAPITALS, INCLUDING US, WILL SOON BE STARTING TO INFORM THEIR PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT MBFR. FURTHER, THOUGH WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO PREVENT IT, SOME LEAKAGE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALLIED POSITION TO THE PRESS HAS ALREADY OCCURRED (E.G., TOTH , MIDDLETON AND GETLER ARTICLES), AND FURTHER LEAKAGE IS PROBABLY INEVITABLE IN ANY EVENT.

C. THE DUTCH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN MOSTHELPFUL IN SUP-PORTING OUR GENERAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT OF ALLIED NEGOTIATING POSITION. WE RECOGNIZE THAT GON MAY HAVE SOME PROBLEMS OF ITS OWN IN DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR AN APPROACH TO MBFR WHICH DEFERS POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS OF EUROPEAN FORCES TO A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS. JUDGMENT AS TO HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH SUCH PROBLEMS, IS, OF COURSE, ONE FOR GON ITSELF TO MAKE. END. FYI.
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